

Michigan has been greatly affected by Lee's energetic guidance and leadership. In the intervening years between 1956 and the present, Lee has been a driving force for the Republican Party. From community elections to those elections national in scope, Lee always offered great wisdom and foresight. Throughout his life, Lee has shown tremendous concern for his fellow citizens and was always a willing volunteer for any task. I am proud to have had the chance to work beside him.

Mr. President, I am extremely honored to have this opportunity to thank him for his many years of service and friendship. He is a very dear friend and my thoughts and prayers go out to him, his wife Nancy, and the rest of his family.●

TRIBUTE TO WESTERN COVENTRY SCHOOL, 1997 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

● Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the achievement of Western Coventry School of Coventry, Rhode Island, which was honored earlier this year as a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School.

It is a highly regarded distinction to be named a Blue Ribbon School. Through an intensive selection process beginning at the state level and continuing through a federal Review Panel of 100 top educators, many of the very best public and private schools in the nation are identified as deserving of this honor. These schools are particularly effective in meeting local, state, and national goals. However, this honor signifies not just who is best, but what works in educating today's children.

Now, more than ever, it is important that we make every effort to reach out to students, that we truly engage and challenge them, and that we make their education come alive. At the Western Coventry School, a kindergarten through sixth grade school, parent-teacher cooperation, through an award winning Parent Teacher Association (PTA), has helped to improve the quality of education. The school has instituted a mentoring program for at-risk youth and has made concerted efforts to ensure that students with special needs receive the assistance they require. In addition, teachers have taken an aggressive role in developing

new approaches to teaching reading and math.

Mr. President, Western Coventry School is dedicated to the highest standards. It is a school committed to a process of continuous improvement with a focus on high student achievement. Most importantly, Western Coventry recognizes the value of the larger community and seeks its support and involvement. This school and community are making a huge difference in the lives of its students.

Mr. President, the Blue Ribbon School initiative shows us the very best we can do for students and the techniques that can be replicated in every school to help all students succeed. I am proud to say that in Rhode Island we can look to a school like the Western Coventry School. Under the leadership of its principal, Barry Ricci, its capable faculty, and its involved parents, Western Coventry School will continue to be a shining example for years to come.●

HOW NOT TO BUILD CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT STATISTICS

● Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, on October 16, following the release of monthly price data by the Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], the Social Security Administration announced a 2.1-percent cost of living adjustment [COLA] for Social Security and other Government programs. Yet a week earlier, the Social Security Administration circulated a table which indicated that the benefit increase would be 2.7 percent.

How could this happen? Simple. The Administration, as I have noted on numerous occasions, insisted on using an outdated economic forecast so as to obscure the fact that the budget was approaching balance in fiscal year 1997 in the absence of a budget agreement. While that budget legislation was pending in Congress last summer, it was feared that if the economic outlook was too favorable, pressure for the budget bills would decrease and agreement would not be reached. And so the Social Security Actuaries had no recourse other than to use the official forecast when presenting data on the actuarial status of the trust funds.

Here is why the numbers were, to put it mildly, misleading. The Administration notes that its midsession budget review—released almost 2 months late

on September 5—is based on economic projections finalized in early June. But even by then it should have been clear what was happening to prices. By early June 1997, data for 8 months of the benefit computation period, August 1996–April 1997, indicated that, on an annual basis, CPI-W had increased by 2.4 percent. To increase by 2.7 percent for the full year would require, on an annual basis, a 3.2-percent increase in CPI-W for the remaining 4 months, April 1997–August 1997, of the computation period. Put another way the Administration was predicting a one-third increase in the inflation rate. Yet, on an annual basis, CPI-W increased by only 1.5 percent during these 4 months. That is, the inflation rate actually declined by almost 40 percent.

In short, by the spring it should have been clear that the benefit increase would be less than 2.7 percent. And by late summer it was virtually certain that the increase would be 2.0 to 2.2 percent, but nowhere near 2.7 percent.

What does this mean to the average beneficiary now receiving a monthly benefit of \$749? Instead of a \$20 monthly benefit increase—2.7 percent of \$749—the benefit increase will be about \$16. Fortunately, few if any Members of Congress rushed out in early October and announced to constituents, based on the Administration's estimates, that they would receive an expected 2.7-percent benefit increase.

The Advisory Commission to Study the Consumer Price Index—the Boskin Commission—concluded that the Consumer Price Index [CPI] overstates changes in the cost of living by about 1.1 percentage points. And many other researchers concur with the findings of the Boskin Commission. The American Association of Retired Persons [AARP], and others, have argued that the only way to keep politics out of the process is to let the BLS do it. Such critics should be mindful that accurate statistics include timely and accurate projections. By late September or early October of each year Social Security beneficiaries should be able to rely on their Government to provide reliable projections of upcoming benefit increases.

Mr. President, I ask that a table prepared by the Social Security Administration, Office of the Actuary, on October 7, 1997, be printed in the RECORD.

The table follows:

TABLE 1.—ECONOMIC ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THE MID-SESSION REVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 1998 BUDGET
(In percent)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Change in real GDP	2.4	3.5	2.0	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
Civilian unemployment rate	5.4	5.0	5.2	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Change in average annual CPI	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Change in average covered wage	4.3	4.6	3.2	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9
Real wage differential	1.4	2.0	0.7	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4
Benefit increase	2.9	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Average annual interest rate	6.6	6.7	6.1	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4

Note: Social Security Administration, Office of the Chief Actuary, October 7, 1997.●

WORKING MOTHER'S 100 BEST COMPANIES FOR WORKING MOTHERS

• Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, yesterday afternoon, I attended the White House Conference on Child Care. Business, labor, and religious leaders will be sharing their strategies and successes for improving and expanding child care opportunities. This afternoon's discussion is entitled "learning from what works."

In government, we can do no better than to look to the private and non-profit businesses and organizations in our communities to learn what works. With today's focus on child care issues, I commend to my colleagues, this month's issue of Working Mother Magazine, and it's 12th annual survey of the 100 best companies for working mothers.

The companies included on the 100 best list are ones that provide working mothers with exceptional opportunities to contribute to the company's success, and to care for their families. Working Mother Magazine measures companies based on five criteria: pay, opportunities to advance, child care, flexibility, and other family friendly benefits.

The 100 best companies have made a commitment to strengthening families and communities. At the same time, these companies are strengthening their bottom line. In order for our Nation to remain globally competitive in the 21st century, we must utilize all of the talents of all of our people. Working mothers have talents and abilities our country cannot afford to be without. The 100 best companies are utilizing creative, effective solutions to the problems working mothers face as they try to balance career and family concerns. By doing so, these companies profit as mothers are able to focus more energy and attention on their work.

Making jobs work for women and their families is what these companies are all about. I am especially proud that 7 of the companies on the 100 best list are based in my home State of Illinois. Each of the Illinois companies has taken steps to recognize the talents of working mothers, and to help them help their families. Among other accomplishments,

Allstate Insurance Co. recently opened a \$3 million child care center in Northbrook, IL, that not only provides child care at the company's headquarters, but also offers full day kindergarten and holiday, vacation, and backup care;

Amoco Corp. provides elder and child care referral services that were used by over 6,000 employees last year, and provides reimbursements for child care expenses accrued due to travel or overtime;

Leo Burnett Co., Inc., continues to promote working mothers to executive positions. Today, the president and the chief creative officer are women;

Fel-Pro, Inc., offers family friendly programs ranging from an 8-week sum-

mer camp to a \$1,000 savings bond for newborns. Fel-Pro has been included in the 100 best list since its inception years ago;

First Chicago NBD Corp. has been improving on their already impressive array of services with financial support for adoptions, and benefits for part-time employees;

Motorola, Inc., according to the magazine, "remains the corporate leader in providing subsidized child care for employees' kids";

Northern Trust Corp. has doubled the number of employees working at home in the past year; and

Sara Lee Corp. has a commitment to helping working mothers advance. Today, its general counsel, chief financial officer and treasurer, among others, are female.

This list includes some of the most successful companies in the country, including the largest advertising firm in the country, and one of the Nation's oil companies. What each of these seven corporations has shown is that both companies and children benefit from policies that take not only the employee, but her whole family into account. Working mothers are an important asset to the Nation's employers. Strong families are an important asset to us all.

I urge my colleagues to read this month's issue of Working Mother Magazine so that we can learn from industry leaders—we all benefit from policies that support working families.●

THE IMPORTANCE OF RENEWABLE FUELS

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, just this week, we in the U.S. Senate have been confronted with two strong reminders of the importance of renewable fuels to this country. This emerging industry, potentially lucrative for American farmers and agribusiness, can help solve two key problems that we face: the impact of greenhouse gases on the global climate, and the growing dependency of the American economy on the import of foreign petroleum products.

On Wednesday, President Clinton, announced the U.S. position with respect to the climate change treaty to be negotiated in Kyoto in December. Under his instructions, American negotiators will seek to fashion an agreement that will commit, on an equitable basis, the nations of the world to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases over the next several decades. If implemented, our ability to meet such goals will depend greatly on the development and adoption of new technologies which are more energy efficient. The President's proposal to provide tax incentives for more energy efficient technology should be important in spurring such development efforts. Renewable fuel technologies, especially those derived from agricultural products, will be a crucial component of such activities. Many forms, such as the energy that

will be produced from the switchgrass project underway in Centerville, IA, offer the added benefit of actually withdrawing carbon from the atmosphere. Expansion of production of renewable fuels also increases income for the farm sector, and creates new jobs. In keeping with a key theme voiced at the recent White House Conference on Climate Change, with renewable fuels we can do well by doing good, for American agriculture and the whole country.

If that were not enough, Mr. President, Tuesday's announcement by the Commerce Department that record oil imports caused our merchandise trade deficit to increase in August gives added urgency to the promotion of renewable fuels. It is clear that even if no treaty on climate change comes out of Kyoto, our dependence on oil imports still looms on the horizon. The share of imports in U.S. oil consumption has been climbing steadily over the last few years, and the Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy projects that the share could reach 75 percent within the next 10-15 years. Increased production and use of renewable sources of energy could help to stem that tide, and reduce our need to rely on energy sourced in large part from a politically unstable region of the world.

During this session of Congress, we can begin to respond to these events in at least one concrete way, by passing into law the proposed extension of the ethanol tax credit to the year 2007. I urge my colleagues to seize this opportunity now to show our confidence in agriculture's ability to make a positive contribution in these areas by producing renewable energy for American consumers to use.●

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 37

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand that Senate Joint Resolution 37, which was introduced earlier today by Senator JEFFORDS, is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). The clerk will read the joint resolution for the first time by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows.

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 37) to provide for the extension of a temporary prohibition of strikes or lockout and to provide for binding arbitration with respect to the labor dispute between Amtrak and certain of its employees.

Mr. LOTT. I now ask for its second reading and would object to my own request on behalf of the other side of the aisle.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 2646

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 2646 has arrived from